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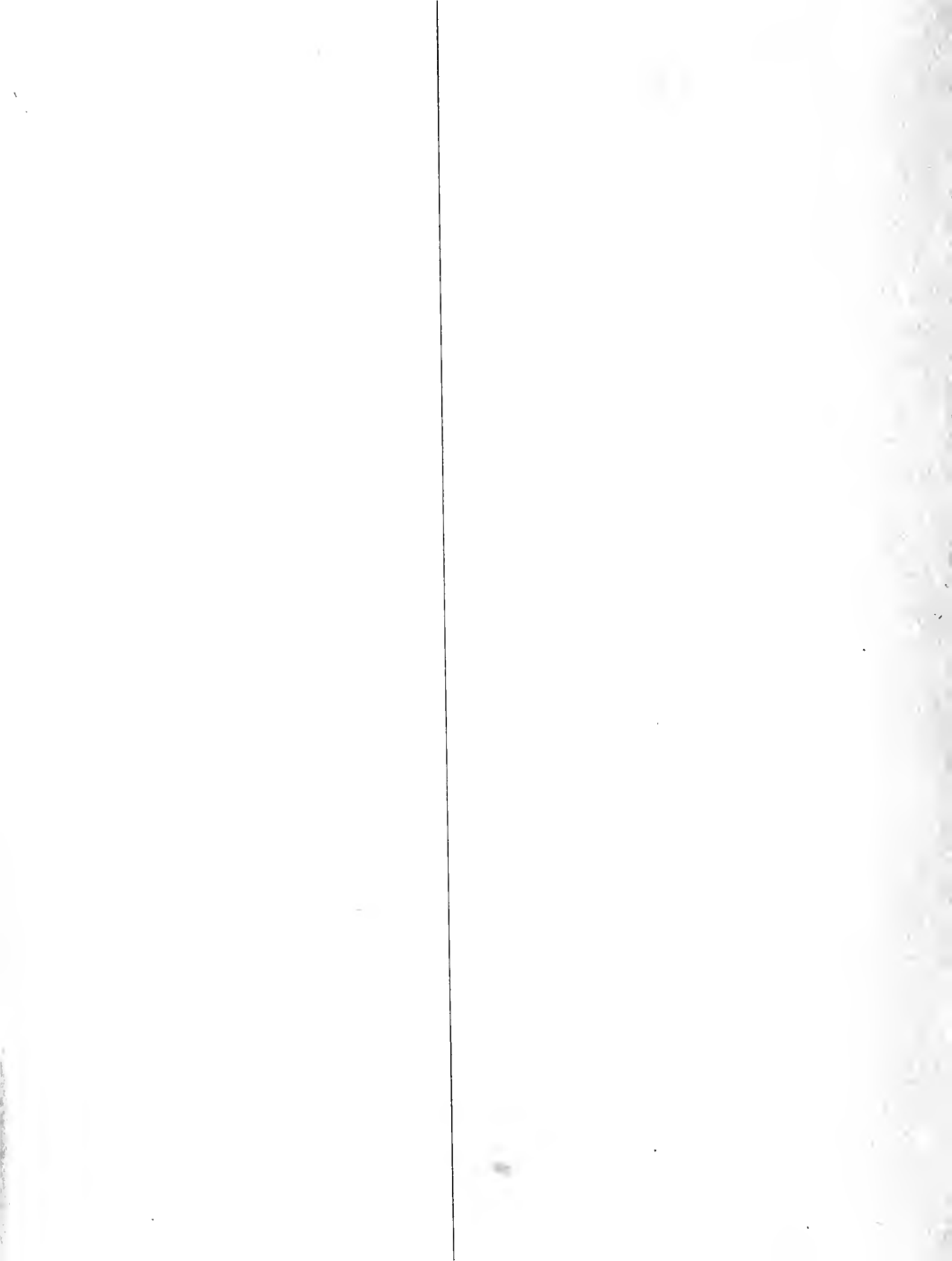
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1916

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ISH BAR ISH



ISH BAR ISH

A SONG OF LOVE AND
COURAGE

WITH
OTHER VERSES

N. P. BARLOW, A. B.
GREENVILLE, MICH.
1916

Presented
to the
Library
of the
University of
Michigan
1916

DEDICATION

To my children with whom I have had a home for ten years past, and who have kindly furnished forth the printing, I dedicate these lines, hoping they may be a welcome reminder of their parents.

—N. P. B., *Greenville, Mich., Aug. 10, 1916*

PREFACE

So late in life I have selected from my little stock of verses such as seem most appropriate. If some should seem unwise or out of place it may be laid to the clumsy vanity of an old man.

N. P. Barlow

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NOV 22 1916

me

SERENADE

N. P. BARLOW

LOTTIE E. CRARY

Allegretto

8

lento pp

mf

I have heard the
I have heard the

mp

whist-ling quail In the corn, in the corn!
night-in-gale In the thorn, in the thorn.

f

dimin.

And — he sang it all day long, Sang his song, sang his song;
And — he sang it all night long, Sang his song, sang his song;

mf

For his mate was in her nest,
For his mate was in her nest,

pp

With her eggs be - neath her breast!
With her brood be - neath her breast!

f *mf* *dimin.*

And he sang it all day long, All day long, All day long!
And he sang it all night long, All night long, All night long!

mf

p *pp*

Day long! Day long! Long!
Night long! Night long! Long!

p *pp* *gracile* *pp*



Ish Bar Ish

A Song of Love and Courage

FIRST EVENING

Bar Ish

Lean forth at thy casement, O most beautiful,
As the sun at the windows of the morning.
Mine eyes are entangled in the locks of thy forehead,
Thou holdest my soul in the palms of thy hands.
If I behold thee but for a moment I shall return to my toil with
delight.
The thought of that vision shall inspire the labors of the day.

Bath Eva

Pass on, O devotee of a moment,
Look thou upon the daughters of thy people.

Bar Ish

The daughters of my people are comely,
But their hearts are empty and their words are vanity.
In their presence I think of only thee,
But call me not "of a moment",
For I will not cease till thou speak a word from thy heart

Bath Eva

O most persistent among men,—
Long hast thou stood by our walls,
Long hast thou gazed towards my lattice;
Go, I beseech thee, and leave me
To my garden and my stitches.

Bar Ish

Year by year thy garden blooms again.
It's roses are envious of thy color,
It's lilies hide at the coming of thy feet;
But thou hast grown weary of it's care,
For other thoughts are in thy heart.

Thy stitches have portrayed the deeds of other times,—
The valor of those who won, the mischance of those who fell.
Thou hast wondered at their rage,
Thou hast shuddered at their deeds;
But in all this thy heart has ceased to be engaged.

ANOTHER EVENING

Serenade

Ye dews that dash my feet,
Ye mosses of the ground,
Ye songs of birds asleep,
Ye flowers that bloom around;
Ye waters vast and deep,
Ye solitudes profound,
Ye notes of silent night,
Ye leaves of whispering trees,
Ye heavens with stars bedight
And riddles of the breeze;
O let me sing aright,
Her timid heart to please.

Repeat—

Bath Eva

How long will your song assail my windows,
And scare away the slumbers from my pillow?
Wilt thou persecute me forever?

Bar Ish

I hear thy voice and am elated.
Would that I might behold thy form
As I saw thee among thy maidens,
Walking like the moon among her stars.
Thy grace was like the gestures of lilies
When bowed by the breath of the evening.
My heart went captive with thee to the place of thy abode.
Not the voice of my song disquiets thy slumbers.
Thy ears listening for the song and hearing it not,
Ring again because of the silence;
And thine own heart wakes thee.

Bath Eva

My father's dogs are kenneled in the court,
I will bid the slaves unleash them,
Then thou wilt flee.

Bar Ish

I will leap to thy window and to safety.

Window Closed

ANOTHER EVENING

Serenade

“Window Song”

O window of the fairest of the fair,
I know my love stands just behind thy frame;
I know her rosy fingers touch thy bar,
I know with love her heart is all aflame.

O frame of iron, cold, and gray, and strong,
In vain my fingers touch the tuneful string;
Thou hast no ears to listen to my song,
But just within is one who hears me sing.

O sash of lead, all cold, and dark, and blue,
Unmoved by music and averse to love;
Careless of him who standeth in the dew,
Thou hast no heart to feel, nor pulse to move.

O bar of brass that holds the hinges fast,
Warmed with the pressure of her trembling hands,
Yield to my song the victory at last,
Open to him who waits, and sings, and stands.

O panes of crystal, painted o'er with flowers,
With soft translucence to confuse the light;
The while I wait through all the chilly hours
Ye keep your vigil and deny my sight.

Bath Eva

And there again?

Bar Ish

And shall be.
I shall walk among the trees of the grove of thy father.

The wings of my song shall throb at the bars of thy window.
I shall stand in the dews of the night,
The mists of the midnight shall drench my garments.
The stars above thee shall see me in my place,
To gaze towards the place of thy rest
Is better than to rest mine eyes in slumber,

Bath Eva (Derisively)

How long?

Bar Ish

Thy derision is sweeter to me than the praise of a multitude,
For it brings thy voice to my ears.
How long?
Till my garments are rent with brambles,
Till my feet are pierced with thorns,
Till my hands are weak with years,
And mine eyes are dim with age.
Till my voice can no longer penetrate thy walls
To startle the silence from thine ears.

Bath Eva

“Till” I shall be taken by one of the nobles,
And my children stand among the princes.

Bar Ish

Till thy parents are gathered to their fathers.
Till thy admirers leave thee to thy wrinkles and thy tears,
My heart shall be faithful as the faithful stars.

Bath Eva

Did an owl speak? Did a raven foredoom me?

Window Closed

ANOTHER EVENING

Serenade

“Pillow Song”

I sing my song but not to wake thee,
 O my love, my dove,
I sing my song that I may make thee
Sink more deep in sleep;
And when thy dreams to heaven take thee,
 O my love, my dove,
Thy dreams of heaven can never make thee
 More lovely or more fair.
So when I've sung my evening lay,
I'll take my harp and go my way.

Repeat—

Bath Eva

I hear thy words,
Thy mind is filled with follies.
The hope of thy heart has deceived thee again and again.
My father hath planned, and my brother.
I shall exalt our house among the families of the great.
Princes have sued for my hand. Nobles bow down at our
 gates.
My father shall choose among many.
The treasures of kingdoms are uncovered before me,
The splendors of many lands are laid before mine eyes.

Bar Ish

But one moment, O fairest among the beautiful,
Thy father shall not choose, nor thy brother;
For thou hast already chosen.
It will be according to my words,—and thine.

Shouldst thou hearken to thy father's wishes
Or serve unto thy brother's ambitions,
Thy husband would be of the sons of the haughty,
Adapted to sloth, and to be delighted,
Accustomed to be obeyed,
Impatient with them who refuse;
Intolerant of uplifted eyes,
His will would be thy guide,—
His lightest whim thy law.
His servants would watch over thee,
And but little wouldst thou exceed them in his eyes.
Thou wouldst build thy house at the price of thy joy,
And thy own heart would loose its compensation.
These are the manners of nobles, and sons of kings,
Beginning to practice their lessons in tyranny.

Bath Eva

O wisdom, where is thy beard?

Bar Ish

Wisdom dwelleth not only behind the beards of sages.
The straight way is clear to the eye of effectation.
As the rain descendeth and the sun shineth downward,
So the quick heart of love finds passage to his purpose.
Thou canst smile and decide,
But the wisdom in thy heart approves the words I have spoken.
That wisdom has guided the choice thou hast made.

Bath Eva

Thou art wiser than the magi.

Bar Ish

I see thy suitors come.
They come from broad lands.

Their horses are 'dight with adamant and gold;
Bells of silver vibrate at the borders of their trappings.
Their chariots sparkle with amethyst.
They are paved with mosaic of onyx and sapphire.
They bring letters from monarchs and kings,
They are attended by servants of noble name.
They bow down at the gates of thy father,
They bring presents to the chambers of thy mother.
The treasures of kingdoms are spread before thee.

I see them depart.

Their gifts are thrown as a heap
In the bottom of their chariots.
Their faces are black with the wrath of their astonishment.
The gestures of their hands threaten backwards
Towards the bars of thy windows that mock them.

Then I say to my heart, 'Lift up thy heart'.
And the heart of my heart is lifted up.

ANOTHER EVENING

Bath Eva

Have not I dismissed thee from our walls,
Have not I warned from among our trees?
My brother hath discovered thy coming.
He waits for thee among the trees of our grove.
With a dagger he waits behind the shrubs,
Fage is in his heart, his hand is on the weapon.
Why wilt thou drench our soil with thy blood?
Why besprinkle our leaves with thy life?
Thy coming has brought disfavor upon me,
And thy life to the border of destruction.
Be admonished in season and depart.
I will bless at thy going, so thou come not again.

Bar Ish

Should I go at the voice of thy warning
Thou thyself wouldst hiss at the turning of my back.
Thou wouldst say, "He too, is made of clay,
Too little the fire of God's breath inspires his dust".
Thou wouldst go to thy pillow in anger
And be shamed at the looks of thy maids.
Thou wouldst hide from the eyes of thy friends
And doubt the courage of men.
The mother who bore me would be the object of thy pity.

Now thou dost listen for him who dares to come.
Should I turn my back at thy brother's threatening
Thou would'st sleep to dream of hares and the deer.
I will seek thy brother and ask him the way he takes
To prevail when he visits the daughters of princes.

Bath Eva

Ah me!

Bar Ish

Thou hast spoken a word from thy heart.

Brother, flashing the dagger

Bath Eva

Ah, Ah, I see the dagger!

Brother

I have thee now at last.
Come thou with me,
The deed needs not too many eyes.
Seest thou this toy?
It's heft shall press thy breast,
It's blade shall cool the pride
That fills the tumid cavities about thy heart.

Bar Ish

I see the plaything,—and have seen it many times.
'Twas hardened at my forge,
In waters colder than the Pharpar
Flowing through Damascus,
Thawed from the snows of Lebanon.
Five days did my hammer compact it's steel
Until its trenchant point can penetrate
Through mail of threefold linked brass.
And in it's hilt I set the jewels
Which outstar the stars.

Brother

Thou hast provided for thy passage to thy ancestors.
Cease parley and swift prayers that thy poor soul
May find the journey clear to that dull paradise
To which ignoble birth hath destined thee.

Bar Ish

Thy father, I have heard, hath gained possession
Of broad lands on earth.
Hath he obtained foreclosure too, of all the seats in heaven?
And hath he set thee in the place of God
To portion out the place to them who humbly pray?

Brother

Dost thou employ the remnant of thy breath to mock me?

Bar Ish

It is appointed unto men to die.
And this decree of God I would not chide,
Else monsters would inhabit this fair world forever.

Brother

Stay thou.
What is thy name, that I may send thy mother word
Why thou art delayed so long.

Ish Bar Ish

My name is Ish Bar Ish, son of the armourer,
And my apprenticeship was at his anvil.
But since my father's passage into rest
I have changed the trade,
And now the implements with which men strove
In mortal combat, life for life,
To serve the claims of kings,
Sharpened no longer at my fire, lie rusting.
Instead of them the peaceful tools of toil are honored.

I have invented the revolving wheel
Which lifts the fertile waters from the deep morass,
Pouring them over desert lands,
Making them smile with figs and vines and grain
In places where the slender crane,
Descending on his crooked wings,
Slumped to his feathers in the ooze,
The quaking bog is changed to solid ground
Fit for the plough, and tread of heavy cattle.

But I must hasten while thy impatient dagger
Delays it's work.

It is permitted unto men to die,
Else life's hard burden might forever press the poor,
And grief and loss might be perpetual.

It is a custom older than the law
That those who die may send a message
To those they leave behind them in the world.
As thou alone art present, I speak my words

And send my message and my blessing
By thy faithful memory.
So sheathe thy weapon for a little space,
I shall not flee away.

They who too hotly threaten evil bespeak themselves.
Thy hard words are harder than thy heart.

And when thou wentest forth to win thy choice
Among the daughters of the mighty,
How came the victory, where others sued in vain ?
Half the fight was won when thou thyself didst love.
With half the battle thine thy heart was bold
To go where princes stood irresolute.
Ambition's virtues rising high within thee
Gave thee dignity to seek above thy birth,
For something higher than ancestral wealth.
Thou wouldst have titles, provinces, viceroyalties,
And thy descendants be the heirs of thrones.
These thou hast well in prospect now,
Won by love's own courage where princes have departed in
astonishment.

These are the words to thee from one
Who soon shall walk the shadowy road
That leads to where the judgement sits.

And when thou goest to thy sister, tell her from me
That he who won her heart was not afraid.
And when thou lookest on her disheveled hair,
Wet with the deluge of her tears
Be pitiful as to a mourner,
E'en now I hear her voice as if she were a widow.

Brother

Thou has said enough.
Thou shalt see my father.

Come thou with me.

Father, I have brought the man to thee.

Father

Loaned I not to thee the precious dagger
That thou mightest satisfy thy rage?
And thou hast brought the work to me.

Brother

He looks and speaks most wondrously.

Father

Give thou the jeweled ^u~~ba~~ble unto me.

To Bar Ish

Now look on me and speak if thou dost dare.

Bar Ish

Most willingly I improve the space of time
Which thy forbearance grants me.

Thou once didst labor for a man
With wealth piled up above the highest hope.
Thou wast a servant of his camels and his wares.
Thou didst see his daughter, a vision and an inspiration,
Then life began for thee;
Labor was joy, care a pleasure unto thee.
Thou didst begin to see and seize advantage.
(Love's hands are strong. Love's eyes can see afar.)
And thou didst win him gain, and rise among his servants.
To the place of honor and of trust.
By the strong alchemy of love's endeavor
Thou didst transmute his silver into gold.
Thou didst find market for his wares

In cities far and strange,
Didst pioneer new passes
Over mountains steep with everlasting ice,—
New roads across the horizontal deserts faint with thirst.
And when his caravans hastened to outgo the desert robbers
They did but bring their burdens sooner home.
And when his ships, dispatched by thy hand,
Were driven by tempests
It did but hasten their arrival at his ports.
For God was on the oceans and the deserts
Working the wishes of thy heart.
God loveth lovers as He Himself is love.

And when the envious merchantmen
Conspired their plans to ruin him,
Thy anxious ear caught the first whisper of the plot,
And thy quick action changed the danger into gain.

Then thou didst speak the word
Which day by day was growing larger in thy heart.
His answer proved him generous and just.
His daughter now adorns thy house with matchless dignity.
In thy hands are his possessions; and clothed with honor
He sitteth with the elders in the gate,
And all his words have gravity of golden emphasis.
Thy memory is good. Thy heart is just.

Father

Balzan, take this man in
And let him stand before the mistress of this house.

Balzan

Thy husband sendeth this man unto thee.

Mother

Art thou the wretch who with silly jingle

And with boastful words at night
Hast so beguiled our daughter's ears to listen and her eyes to
gaze
That when the princes came and laid dominions at her feet
Her eyes were turned away, her feet despurned her opportunity?

Bar Ish

I bow myself in thy presence.

Mother

Balzan, go call the Kenite.

Kenite

Here I am.

Mother (Sotto voce)

Speak in the gibbensh of thy mountains.
The less he hears, the easier thy work.
Take this fellow down through the dark passage way,
And when that trinket at thy girdle
Hath finished playing with his liver
Feed him to the dogs of the outside night.

Kenite

This trifle at my girth hath felt the vitals
Of many a sneeking scoundrel, and vultures had their feast,
But this man hath an eye to daunt a lion,
And when I look upon his hands
I see beneath the forge's grime
The ridges of such sinews as make my bones to tremble.

Mother

What hast thou to do with trembling?
I took thee, fiercer than they,

From hunting panthers on thy native hills—
But I have pampered thee with wheat and silk
Until thou thinkest of thy life.
And thou hast looked upon my maids—

Kenite

No maid of thine shall ever say
The Kenite shied at his work because of fear.

Mother

Now speakest thou a man once more.
Go now, and may the god of vengeance speed thy work.

Kenite

I hunted on my native hills,
But when I followed thee to this thy lair—

Mother

Silence, and to the work I bid thee.

. . . .

SCENE—BAR ISH RETURNING

Mother

What! Hast thou returned unharmed?
How went the fray? Where is the Kenite?

Bar Ish

Fray? There was no fray.
Before the darkness could disguise his attitude
My arms encircling bore him down the passage way
And gave him vision of the outside night.

And if I rightly judge, ashamed to see thy face,
His purpose baffled and his work unfinished,
He hies away back to his mountain home.
I think the thought because I heard as hands were kissed,
And soft adieus were said to windows just above.
I guess by now the pillows of a maid
Are being moistened with her tears in silence of her chamber.

Well may she weep for man so brave and strong.
He struggled well and made no words,
Though he expected only death.
I know his courage. I have seen the man before.
He had his lances mended at my father's fire.
They had been twisted in the lion's jaws.

E'er long that maid of thine will follow him.
She will leave the work of hanging curtains of silk
In thy soft chambers;
And at the door of some far mountain cabin
Her uplifted hands shall bless him as he goes;
And her fond heart, anxious to God,
Shall follow him as he goes into the lion's lair,
Or snatches the whelps of leopards from their dens.

Mother

And thou hast come from him unhurt?
Thou art the first who e'er escaped his dagger.

Bar Ish

I am the first who ever loved thy daughter.
Love goeth forth from God, sent on His divine behest.
Sometimes conspiring stars promote the errand.
Sometimes the envious earth conceals a thousand dangers;
And cruel hands beset the path with pitfalls,
Weaving the way across with thorns and stings.
Now would I say a word to thee in simple speech.

Thou dost love thy daughter much,
Too much to calmly look on her distress.
Thy daughter loveth me.
This I know too well to hear a contradiction.
To thwart her love will break her heart,
And blast the promise of her life.
And doth thy daughter now inherit such a world of wealth
That she must be deprived of life's best boon,—
Her heart's free choice?

For gold and diadems must the long hunger of her soul
Forever go unsatisfied, starved to the grave,
Till every hope shall dwindle to despair?

To save her life from such a dire calamity
I enter into dangers such as now surround me,
Pleading for her joy for all the time to come.

Now that I speak of love and life
The thing I have to say is well begun.

Thou once didst love,
And loving once hath loved till now,
For only love could kindle eyes like thine.
Only a true and faithful heart
Could preserve the beauty of thy youth.

Thy husband, once a bashful boy,
Untied the burdens from the camels
Before thy father's warehouse doors.
It happened on a day thine eyes met his,—
Small need of words to tell the story out,—
How by affection's quickened wit and strong endeavor
He wrought his way into thy father's favour,
Became the trusted leader of his enterprise,
To demonstrate the wisdom of thy father's plans.
Small need of words to remind thee how bold he was
When he escorted thee across the desert,
Defending thee and thine against the robbers;

And how they brought him to thy tent,
Sore wounded in the fight;
And all thy heart of pity and of love
Went forth to staunch his blood.
Thy watchful eye, the vision of thy presence,
Thy yearning for his life restored his strength again,
Thy inmost heart, and all thy thoughts were given to him.
And when the courtly suit of rank and power
Came bowing at thy feet, expecting easy conquest,
Thou didst dismiss them in astonishment.
And when he, thy father's servant
Asked thy father for thy hand,
Thy soul was in the question,
Thy joy was in the answer.
And at the wedding feast the guests could say,
'The man is strong and wise, the woman beautiful'.
The beauty that they praised then has over-lived the years.
Now I behold whence came the soul of beauty
Which in thy daughter holds my heart enthralled.

Mother

Balzan, call hither Tirza.

Tirza

Here I am.

Mother

Make haste and let my daughter stand before my eyes.

SCENE

Bath Eva, not seeing Bar Ish standing aside

O my mother, what have they done?
Where have they spread upon the ground

The crimson of his blood ?
Show me the place and I will spread
The choicest robe of purple o'er his corpse
And sitting down beside, I'll watch away the hours.
My tears shall wet the soil with bitter salt,
My voice of grief shall scare away the creatures of the night,
And on my locks cold stars distil their dews.

When day shall rise, I'll choose the choicest place
In all my garden ground
Where roses shed their bloom,
Where balsams weep their balm,
And stooping willows spread their shade of grief;
There deep I'll delve a place,
And on a bed of lilies lay him down.
And I will walk among my flowers
And gaze upon that sacred place
Till age shall dim the eyes that once were bright.

O my mother, what have they done ?
Where is his body ?

Mother, pointing to Bar Ish

My daughter, there it is.

Bath Eva

O! O! And yet alive ?

Bar Ish

The pitying hand of God hath given me back to thee.

Mother

My hand and heart hath given thee freely up to him.
And dost thou give to him thy troth ?

Bath Eva

All my troth and all my heart.

Mother, to Bar Ish

And thou?

Bar Ish

And I.

Mother, to Balzan and Tirza

Send for his mother. Wake all the house.
Spread out the choicest of our store,
And let the feast be large,
Until the day shall smile again.
Then let our steward visit all the gates,
And there in hearing of the elders
Let him announce

OUR DAUGHTER IS BETROTHED



Various Verses

To My Mother-in-Law



MRS. RUTH HUMPHREY

On Her Ninetieth Birthday

Amidst thy sorrows which have need of tears,
Thou hast bestowed thy generous tears on us;
And through a score of painful borrowed years
Thy heart has answered to these earthly ties,—
Though blessed hands have beckoned from the skies
Thou still hast stayed with us away from Paradise.

Till God shall call thee to a welcome home,
So stay with us for many years to come.

—N. P. Barlow, 1905

Song of Four-Score Years

Ten years ago I finished out my three-score years and ten;—
That is the term of life the Book allows to men:
And from eternity, so near to me, I've borrowed ten.
The interest Time has charged me on those years,
A hard per cent of griefs, and pains, and tears.
The profits I have made upon that golden loan—
The little handfuls gathered where my hands have sown,
The greetings, glad and genial smiles I've won.

My four-score years of life I finish out today;
And wonder at the swarthy reaper's long delay.
And I am warned, as I begin another morrow,
On harder terms my vital breath I now must borrow.

As in the crimson west my swiftly sinking sun
Warns me that life's short day will soon be done,
Fain would I linger pleased on earth to stay,
As children linger loth to leave their evening play.
And from eternity that hath so large a store
Of life, I stay and borrow yet a little more.

I am content to see the morning rise again,
To see the sun, or feel the wind, or hear the roaring rain,
To win another smile, and feel the pleasure of another pain.

—*N. P. Barlow, 80th Anniversary, Oct. 28th, 1914*

Abner Barlow, of Leslie, Michigan

Eighty Years Old, January 10, 1916

The life of the forest deep and old
It's summer heat and winter cold,
The thundering crash of it's falling tree,
That was the life, the life for thee.

The life of the farm, it's fleecy sheep,
It's oxen strong, it's furrows deep.
It's scorching drought, it's dashing rain,
It's ardent suns, it's golden grain.

The life of the manhood, strong and tall,
The life of school and college hall,
Ambition's beacons brightly burn,
Betimes to teach, betimes to learn.

The life of the country's armies brave,
To save the nation, free the slave,
On transport ships, or ocean shore,
In camp and march and battle's roar.

Thy peaceful life of home, alternate work and rest,
With good reward thy labor now is blest.
The skillful hands dismiss the lifelong task,
And soul and spirit for a respite ask.

Thy four-score years have seen each duty done,
Thy work accomplished, thy achievements won,
And hope looks onward to the coming years.
Dismissing cares, and undismayed by fears.

Thy steadfast feet shall tread the shining way,
That leads thee onward to the endless day,
And He shall guide, whose wisdom cannot err,
And he who follows hath no cause to fear.

—N. P. B.

Sparrow's Nest

*Written on finding a sparrow's nest within a handbreadth of the wagon track where
a whole harvest had been brought from the field.—July 1884.*

O poor defenceless bird that buildest on the ground thy nest,
Unmindful that the passing wain pres't with the harvest load
Would grind the sod so near the nestlings of thy breast,
Thy trusting heart of hearts is stayed upon the heart of God.

I ought to trust the same Divine appointment to provide;—
For all the dangers that I dread are God's own harvest passing by;
And while my heart is trembling for the loved ones by my side
The faithful heart of God is bending downward from the sky.

These storms are but the wind and dust of his careering wheels,
And though the earth may tremble deep, the solid heavens shall stand,
And though my eyes are dazed and dim, my heart of heart still feels,
“My Heavenly Father feedeth them” and “holdeth in his hand”.

O Soul

When I behold the starry sky
And blazing meteors passing by
I know the stars are wondrous high
And meteors far; but God is nigh.

And when I see the sun and moon
To shine at midnight and at noon,
I know they both are passing soon
But God remains and so does doom.

O soul of mine, O soul of mine,
The sun and moon may cease to shine,
But all eternity is thine,
And all eternity is thine, is thine.

—Elgin, Oregon, September 1910

Flame

A potter sat and pottered in his clay,
And from his wheel there came a pitcher
Adapted to the shoulder of a slave;
And that it might endure the stress of use,
He passed a flame around it's outward form.

Of the same dust another potter pottered out
The shape and pattern of our ancestors,—
Thine and mine, thine and mine;
And that it might endure eternal stress
Filled it within with an intenser flame.

—1901-3

Life

Life could not wait, because it came from God.
He made it self-secured and self-preserving,
Providing for its own reiteration,
It prophesies its own immortality.

When life begins all things rejoice and leap;
When life is threatened, they listen, peer, and fend;
When it is attacked, they struggle, scream, and fight,
And when they die, they hide; ashamed, defeated, and disgraced.

And by these arguments, created into nature,
God demonstrates his goodness, wisdom, joy;
Beholding these reasons also in himself,
Man demonstrates his immortality.

The Conqueror

“Be Fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it”

On comes the Conqueror,
All shall be subdued,
Paths 'neath the billows,
Rocks and sands from harbor mouths;
Oceans united for the pass' of ships
Deep laden from afar.
Rivers from their courses turned
To wet the desert into green.
He tells the torrent what to do
And to the lightning speaks his will,
Skies cold and thin shall bear the voyager.
Vapors shall lift the wealth untold
From underneath the mountains,
And every wave that smites a shore
Shall help enrich the people.

On comes the conqueror.

ALLEGORY—LIFE AND DEATH

Life

There are parts of the ocean
Where winds drive the storms
To headlands of awful despair,
And the ships of the merchant,
Bereft of their forms,
Dismantled and sinking are there.
The eyes of the floating
Are raised o'er the rime
To the pitiless heavens above,
And the hands of the sinking
Are fighting the brine
As they yearn for the ones whom they love.
And foam strangled voices
Scream into the night
Beseeching the mercy denied,
And the breath of the drowning
Is taking its flight
Up, up through the merciless tide.

Death

There's a part of the ocean
Where darkness is dark,
There's the pennon and anchor
Of many a bark.
There are treasures far-gathered
And precious as hope,
The billows shall never
Surrender them up.

To the depths of the ocean
The winds cannot come,
The storms and commotion
Forever are dumb.

And short the strife,
And long the rest;
And such is life,
And death is blest.

Ambition

Success awaits thee,
Thou who upward strivest.

Toil o'er the barrier;
Above thee is the brim.

Th' abyss is nearer
By each painful step.

The edge is narrow.
Beneath it yawns the crater.

Onward forever,
There is no retreat.

Elgin, Oregon, April 9, 1915

Lines Composed by



MISS LIZZIE HUMPHREY
AFTERWARD MRS. N. P. BARLOW

*Suggested by a question asked by her little niece, Alice Palmer,
about her baby sister*

Mamma, why is sister lying
In the cold so still and white,
Can't you take her up and warm her,
Can't you bring her to the light?

Thus the little child did question
One whose heart was torn with grief,
O, how gladly would she clasped her
To her heart in wild relief.

But she dare not, still and lifeless
Lay the little sleeper there;
O so tiny, pure and guileless,
O, the babe was passing fair,
The little dimpled hands were folded
Nevermore to be unclasp'd,
And the waxen baby features
Rested in death's iron grasp.
And the angels softly lingered
O'er the little marble form,
Sheltered safe from earth's rude tempests,
In the land that knows no storm.

—About 1867

She Loves Us with Her Hands

In grateful notice to my wife's industry; written while she was alive

Her hands are rough with toil
On our rough clothes
And sometimes grimed with soil
While she bestows
Her care, by midnight oil
To make or mend
Our bodies from the wind's turmoil
To well defend.
She loves us with her hands.
With stroke of dire paralysis
Her hands are weak;
And prickly pains and twinges
Through them streak.
But though the joints like rusty hinges
With torture creak,
Their work of love nor flags nor flinches;
Though they should break
She loves us with her hands.

Phoebe's Eggs

There's a Phœbe's nest under every bridge,
There's a nest there, never fear;
You'll see the eggs if you wade in deep,
At the proper time of year.

In under the bridge I looked and looked,
But I couldn't see them at all,
For the log of a stringer was very big,
And the Phœbe's nest was small.

So I rolled my breeches legs up
Clear up to my lanky thighs,
And I waded into the rip'ling stream
That mirrored back the skies.

But under the bridge the stream was deep,
So I let my breeches go,
And up to my arms I waded in,
I wanted to see them so.

But coming home so late from school,
My mother asked where I'd been,
And on my face across her knee
I took my punishment then.

I took my punishment then and there,
Across my poor little legs,
I went to bed but I did'nt care,
I'd seen the Phœbe's eggs.

But when I came after seventy years,
The water was swift and cold;
I lifted the plank to see the nest
For my legs were feeble and old.

A bridge of steel had spanned the stream,
The school was changed for a mill,
The things were near that seemed so far,
And gone was the house from the hill.

But there on a flange of a beam of steel
Was the nest of the Phœbe grey,
But old and wrecked it seemed to be,
For the birds had flown away.

Though cold as water cold could be,
I'd wade there up to my chin,
To get a sight of the Phoebe's eggs,
And get that lickin' agin.

—N. P. B., July 1911

Blank Leaf

*On a blank leaf found in a book belonging to Verona Coe, poet of the Alumnae
of Kalamazoo College 1862-5. Written while in college*

O Blank Leaf, Blank Leaf,
Thou mightest have been a sheaf
Laden with golden grain of thought,
With beauty, feeling, force, and fancy fraught.

O leaf all blank, all blank,
Of her quick pen thou mightest have drank
Some straying stream of wild, unfretted song,
Pouring it's mingled music all along.

Blank Leaf, Blank Leaf, Oh
That thou instead of this shouldst go
Back to the glances of her eye again,
All blurred and blotted by my clumsy pen.

On Seeing a Cricket Killed by a Black Wasp

I heard a cricket tune his lay,
He heard another o'er the way,
And venturing from his open door
He skipped and sung as ne'er before,
And all unconscious of his fate
He thought to reach his neighbor's gate.

But flaming down the summer's breath
There came a glittering form of death,
And swift and strong a dreadful thing
With courage strong and flashing wing
He pounced upon our gallant there
And turned his mirth to black despair.

For clutching with his horrid claws
And gripping with his horrid jaws,
And shadowing with his steel-blue wing
He thrust his dark envenomed sting,
With practiced and unerring art
Deep to his palpitating heart.

O fierce and unrelenting foe !
O death of wild and bitter woe !
O agony of poison pain !
O innocent untimely slain !
How soon has ceased thy cheerful lay,
By such a monster dragged away !

And while I meditate the parable profound,
Writ in the weltering sea and over all the ground,
In every leafy tree and in the vital air
The rush of triumph brings a black despair.
One creature's triumph is another's woe,
And all the verdant earth is framed so;—

It fills with dizzy puzzles all my brain
And thrills my deepest heart with pity's pain.
But while these puzzles did my thoughts amaze
And while I studied on Creation's ways
A voice within me moved by faith to say,
Calmly the great Creator takes His way.
The mind that can through every riddle see
Has planned the plan alike for them and me,
Who formed thy heart to yearn with pity's smart
Hath greater pity in his greater heart.

—August 17, 1901

Faith

Faith cometh with credentials in her hands,
She cometh trippingly with smiles,
And as she cometh ever onward,
Chaunteth and singeth all the while.

—Greenville, 1916

Earth's Dawn

Six thousand years, six thousand years
The earth has rolled, and rolled, and rolled,
And yet her morn but just appears,
And tints the eastern dome with gold;
The morning stars together sing,
“Earth is in her blossoming.”

—Hadley 1870



Æ 40

Harvest Song

Blow gently breezes, blow
Over the harvest field,
Freshen the reapers' brow,
Ripen the golden yield.

Shine ardent sunbeams, shine
Over the harvest field,
Season the sheaves we bind,
Ripen the golden yield.

Stay dashing showers away,
Till bick'ring wains shall come,
All through the sunny day,
To bring the harvest home.

Smyrna, Mich., August 1879

Winds and Waves

I will sing you a song because I am sad,
And my heart is distress for my love,
He is borne by the waves as they welter beneath
And the winds as they baffle above.

The winds and the waves of the sea.

I will sing you a song because I am glad,
My heart is expecting my love,
By waves underneath and the tempests above
He is coming to home and to me.

The winds and the waves of the sea.

I will sing you a song because I am glad,
O thanks to the great God above,
For the winds and the billows that wafted him home,
That hastened and landed my love.

The billows that landed my love,

A Morning Dream

Our hearts seem to tell the same pulses,
Our breath comes again and again,
But onward we move with the moments,
And sigh with a different pain.

We think we repeat the song over
And sing the same stanzas again,
But the joy is a new one forever,
The strain is a different strain.

We part from our friends in the morning,
We pass with a varying pace,
We meet at the shade of the evening,
But meet at a different place.

—Chicago, March 1887

My Choice

There's a shore where waves are beating
O'er the sands of glittering gold,
There's an isle where winds are wafting
Odors and sweets untold.

There are trees with branches bending
With fruitage loaded low;
There are streams of glitt'ring waters
That swiftly to the ocean go.

There are birds of rainbow plumage
That sing where the flowers glow,
And blue are the skies above them,
And green is the earth below.

I'm not in haste to voyage
To those islands sweet and far,
I choose to stay with my chosen
Where all my pleasures are.

Hymns

Look, My Soul

Come, O my soul, behold and see
The shadows of Gethsemane,
The Savior in his agony,
He bore it all, my soul, for thee.

Arise, my soul, draw near and see
The mocking kiss of treachery,
The foes who came, the friends who flee;
He bore it all, my soul, for thee.

Approach, my soul, behold and see
The soldiers as they bow the knee,
The reed, the robe, the mockery;
He bore it all, my soul, for thee.

I've seen my Savior pass along
Amidst a fierce and vengeful throng,
I've seen his flesh all pierced and torn
With lash and nails, and crown of thorn,
He bore it all for me, for me.

I've seen the Roman guard draw near,
I've seen him thrust the cruel spear,
I've seen the crimson, cleansing tide
Descending from his wounded side,
For me, for me, for me.

The Light

Are you living in the light?
Do you trust the Savior's might?
Do you stand the cross beside,—
Nailed hands and pierced side,
Are they present to thy sight,
Are you living in the light?

Can you see the crimson flood?
Flowing, cleansing, generous blood?
Can you see the Savior dead,
Glazing eye, and drooping head,
Are they present to thy sight,
Are you living in the light?

Joseph, gently draw the nail
From the cross' rugged rail,
And upon thy bosom bear
Him who all thy sin did share.
Gazing at the cross on high,
Does it fill thy faithful eye?

—N. P. B.

The Burial

Witness of the Savior's pain,
Nicodemus join the train,
Bear Him to the open tomb
Myrrh and spice and sweet perfume,
In the sunset's lingering sheen
Can you see the solemn scene?

Come my friend, fear not the gloom,
Come descend into His tomb,
Standing in that awful shade,
See the place where Christ was laid.
Look, my brother, see His brow,
Marked with thorns and bruises now.

Can you see the stone that closed
Dark the place where Christ reposed?
Now they set the potent seal,
Set the guard with clang of steel;—
Vain the guard, the sword, the mace,
Angels too, shall guard the place.

Resurrection Morning

Ye women bearing spices and hastening to His tomb,
The angel went before you, and rolled away the gloam.
Ye have no need to wonder who will roll the stone away,
The angel there will show you the place where Jesus lay.
Ye have no need of spices to make a sweet perfume,
The Lord no more abideth within the narrow tomb.
Ye have no need to hasten before the sun shall rise,
He walketh in the garden and makes it Paradise.

Greenville, Mich., Aug. 10, 1916

My Firstborn

When Edith was born in the morning
I took up the beautiful body,

All bright with the soul of my baby
And suffused with her radiant beauty,

I bathed my own soul in the rapture
And bowed to a sence of my duty.

I thanked the great God who had given
This heir of the dowry of heaven,

But my heart was disturbed by possession,
And I waked in the night with unrest,
So great was the gift that was given.

When she was born into the kingdom
I buried her body in water,

And I named her after the Father
And after the Son and the Spirit
Of the kingdom she'd come to inherit.

As I raised her to walk in her "newness"
Her soul was adorned with a halo,

Irradiant, always suffusing,
Around her the splendor and odor
Of a life that came out of the heavens.

When Edith departed at evening
I dug her a grave on the hillside,

The useless and cumbersome body
I buried down deep in the bosom
Of earth, and the snow fell above it.

But her soul went away to the garden
Where the blooming is sweet and forever,
The song and the light and the glory
Descends on her soul till her body
Shall join in the glory to follow.

Coming Home

I turned my feet towards my home
And walked a weary way,
I climbed the hills and crossed the vales
And saw the close of day.
The village then before me lay,
My home was just in sight;
My little daughter out that way
Came bounding, free and light.
She took my hand and led me home
And opened wide the gate,
“You look so tired, I’m glad you’ve come,
The hour is getting late”.
Her voice was restful to my heart,
Her hands were cool and smooth;
She led me to a place apart,
My aching head she soothed.
Now when I come she meets me not,
And never will again
Until she leads me up the path,
My heavenly home to gain.

—Baldwin, February 1887

*Edith was taken while I was
away from home*

I came to the place where my daughter was laid,
And gazed on her beauty again,
I spoke, but to hear me she turned not her head,
Nor moved her white hands to obey.

I called, but she moved not, nor answered again,
But lay with her face to the wall,
She roused not to greet me, entreating in vain,
Nor heeded the stress of my call.

They told me a lover had come for her hand,
Had won her and made her his own,
Had born her away to the glorified land.
Had given her a crown and a throne.

Edith's Eighteenth Birthday

She died at the age of seventeen

O earth, how blest thou art!
To take her earthly part,
Out of thy bosom she arose,
Thy bosom takes her to repose.

O heaven, how blest thou art!
To take her heavenly part,
Down from thy courts she came,
And to thy courts returns again.

O mother, thou hast had her whole!
And thou art doubly blest,
For both her body and her soul
Were nourished at thy breast.

On Receiving a Bouquet from Home

While in Ludington, Michigan

I lifted the brilliant bouquet
And on my poor table it shone,
And I thought of my home far away
Where the daisies and pansies were sown.

I lifted the withered bouquet
Which had lightened the heart in my breast,
And I thought ere I cast it away
I will choose me a few of the best.

Then I thought of the destiny sharp,
Which had severed me out of my home,
And seizing the cords of my harp
I sang them a song of my own.

Song

I have dreamed of your fragrance by night,
I have breathed of your fragrance by day,
I have thought of her beauty more bright,
Who disposed you in pleasing array.

Together she bound you with love,
She has knotted my heart with the band,
My fingers shall never remove
Nor undo the fair work of her hand.

Attached for a week and a day,
Ye shall never be severed apart;
Though exciled myself far away,
I am nearer than ever in heart.

The fingers that gathered these stems
Are sweeter than petals to me,
And the eyes that selected these gems
Are brighter than posies can be.

Ye have come from the heart of my home,
And find my home still in my heart;
Though far from the threshold I roam,
My soul and my home cannot part.

—*Ludington, September 1886*

To Lizzie, a Valentine

Saint Valentine, the legends say,
Was passing through a wood one day
And saw, by chance, a maid and lover,
He saw them meet and kiss each other.
And though a man of monkish vows,
Of all the joys of love bereft,
He was a man of common sence,
And blest the Lord that love was left.
Suppose a monk should kiss a maid,
And bless the Lord that love is left,
And break a vow he never made,
And make a vow he'll never break.
Suppose that monkish lip were mine,
Suppose yourself were treated so;
Would you my life, my valentine,
Deny the blessing? Answer—

My Dream

They think they have her over there
And that's the way it seems,
But in the night she steals away
And comes to me in dreams.

And bending down in beauty rare
She plants a kiss on my face,
But though her eyes are bright with smiles,
She leaves a tear in the place.

The kiss she brings from over there
That is farther than over the sea,

But I am still in this earthly world
And she leaves the tear for me,

—August 20, 1908

Juvenile Jingles

Nursery Song

I heard a little bird today
And he said "Peety Weet".
Because he hadn't any shoes
Or stockings to his feet.

His mamma went a long way off
To find him crumbs to eat,
And all that little bird could say
Was, "Peety weet, weet".

His nesting place was high and cold
Upon a windy street,
And when the storm came roaring by
That bird said, "Peety weet".

The blessed Lord heard what he said
And gave him food to eat,
And now that little birdie sings
His song of "Peety weet".

And God who cares for all the birds
Receives the praises sweet,
And listens to the thankful song
When birds sing "Peety weet".

—Ludington, November 1886

Shepherd Boy

The grass is sweet
Beneath our feet,
 The sky is blue above,
The brook is near,
I have no fear;
 My sheep and lambs I love.

My fleecy sheep
Lie down to sleep
 Within a shady dell,
And one and all
They know my call;
 My lambs they love me well.

Nature Jingles

Buzz

Buzz buzz, beetle bug,
Buzz while you can;
Buzz buzz, beetle bug,
Buzz, my little man

Once you were a beetle grub
Grubbing dirt and clay,
Now you are a beetle bug,
Buzzing night and day.

Once you were a baby boy,
You my little man,
Now you're big enough to buzz;
Keep buzzing while you can.

Sluggard

This fellow is so soft and wet
I'm sure he's not a bug;
He has no wings to fly or buzz
I'm sure he's not a bug.

This fellow is so soft and wet
We'll call his name the slug,
He is so slow to crawl along
We'll call his name the slug.

In long ago he had a shell
He carried on his back,
But very soon he lazy grew,
He thought it hard to pack.

And always as he dragged it round
He wished the thing was off,
So bye and bye he turned around
And *bit* the burden off.

But if you don't believe my rhyme
Look on the creature's back,
And there you'll see the scar that's left
Upon the creature's back.

His ease has cost him so much pain
And he is such a muggard,

I think for him the proper name
Is just the name of sluggard.

Chipmuck Luck

My hole is deep i' the hard, hard ground,
Safe from wolf and safe from hound;
Nuts I took from the old oak tree,
Shells are brown, and nuts for me.

Deep i' the ground I stored them down
Safe from the mouse and golpher brown,
Safe from water and safe from snow,
Chip chip, citter chooter, down I go.

There I'll sleep all safe and deep,
The fox I'll cheat and nuts I'll eat,
Winter done, I'll wake and sing
Chick chuck chock I'll flip and fling.

Chick chock chuck, chipmuck luck,
I'll dig for feed and work for luck,
Nut and acorn, acorn nut,
Chipmuck luck, chuck, chuck, chuck.

Snake and Chipmuck

Says the chipmuck to the garter snake,
You're a curious kind of beast,
You haven't any legs at all,
You haven't any feet.

The garter to the chipmuck says,
You are a timid guy,
I have no legs to run away
But I look a man in the eye.

Snake and Woodchuck

Says the woodchuck to the blacksnake
You've no hands to dig a hole,
You have no feet to run away,
You look like a crooked pole.

Says the blacksnake to the woodchuck,
I have no wings to fly,
I have no feet to run away
But I look a man in the eye.

You have strong hands for digging
And bigger teeth than I,
But I've a heart of courage bold,
I can look a man in the eye.

Snake and Bird

Says the bluejay to the racer blue,
I've often wondered why

So long a body you should have
Without a wing to fly.

The racer to the bluejay says
I'll tell the reason why,

I have no need to fly away,
I can look a man in the eye.

Snake and Man

Don't kill the snake my little man,

He does not want to die;
There's courage in his heart enough
To look a man in the eye.

Owl's Convention

The owl's a very social bird,
And loves his brother owlets;

But he is not designed to live
Like many other fowlets.

Sometimes a flying squirrel nice
He bring into his larder;

But mostly has to live on mice,
And work so much the harder.

Sometimes he sees a little bird
That hasn't gone to roost yet,

And thinks he has a perfect right
To settle down and boost it.

And when he looks upon the snow
And sees a little rabbit,

He spreads his downy wings abroad
To hurry down and grab it.

But they must live so far apart,
It's hard the news to carry,
'Bout who's a going to be engaged,
And who's a going to marry.

So when they've waited for a while
And haven't heard the latest,
They come to gossip and to smile
Like gentlemen and ladies.

And one he starts a merry screech
And ends it with a hooter,
And makes it sound for all the world
Just like a base ball rooter.

And then an owlet from afar
Another answers nearer,
Another answers miles away
And you can hardly hear her.

They snap their bills and flap their wings
And gathering together,
Some of them talk of other things,
And some discuss the weather.

They say, "Ahoo, ahoo, hah hoooo,
Hoh hah, hoh huh, hoh hoow wwor,
Huh hoh hoh hoh, ho hih hah hoh,
There'll be a fine new moon soooooor".

And when they've had a social time
And nodded to each other,
They spread their wings and bow again,
And each flies to his cover.

In some great oak or maple tree
Where he has found a hollow,
Each owl is snugly stowed away,
The sunshine soon will follow.

“Old Stomper”

When we lived over in York State,
We lived in a house of wood,
With gable end to the westward
That little mansion stood.

Two bedrooms on the north side,
That little mansion had;
And on the east the chimney wide,
With oven deep and glad.

And on the south side of the house
There was the cellar stair,
Which led down to the darkness cool,
We kept our taters there.

On that same side the stairway
Led to the chamber floor,
Where father kept the bin of corn,
It was our winter store.

And sometimes in the daytime,
And sometimes in the night
We heard a curious, thumping noise
That filled us with delight.

It sounded like a half grown boy
Who skipped about the floor,
Who thumped and bumped and bumped again,
And then he'd thump some more.

But when we went to look for him,
Went creeping up the stair,
He always vanished out of sight,
We never found him there.

And when we went down stairs again,
And all the house was still,

We'd hear him tramping over head
And tramping with a will.

We wondered how he lived up there
And what he had to eat,

Or how he slept without a bed
And how he shod his feet.

We wondered why he kept himself
So very, very sly,

And ne'er came down to visit us,
Down from that chamber high.

He made a noise and tramped around
And he was such a romper,

Because we knew no better name
We called his name "Old Stomper".

And when we moved away from there
And came to Michigan,

We thought we'd left him far behind,
That little "Stomper" man.

We built our house of logs and shakes
And laid our chamber floor,

We built our fire against the logs,
And hung the outside door.

Though half a thousand miles we'd come,
Into another state,

"Old Stomper" he was here again,
He followed us like fate.

And over half a thousand miles,
And over land and lake,

He'd followed us to Michigan
For old acquaintance sake.

And now we found who Stomper was
And how he made his noise,

For we were sent to sleep up stairs,
We lucky, lucky boys.

For in the early morning light
While morning still was dim,
We raised our heads up from our beds
And got a look at him.

Two little mice came creeping out
From where we did not know,
And then began the scamper swift,
And then began the show.

For underneath the bedstead rough
And 'neath the spinning wheel,
O'er bootjacks and o'er boxes, too
They bucked with toe and heel.

They thumped and bucked with might and main,
They bounded far and high,
And fun was in the way they jumped,
And mischief in their eye.

So then we'd seen Old Stomper true,
The mystery was out,
Two little mice were having fun,
And scampering about.

'Twas mice back there in New York State,
'Twas mice in Michigan,
The mice live everywhere I guess,
My little "Stomper" man.

*Drunkers
Printing
Company
Greenville
Michigan*

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